

BUYING WITHOUT MONEY NO. 1726

**A SERMON
DELIVERED ON LORD'S-DAY MORNING, JUNE 17, 1883,
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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.**

"He that has no money; come you, buy, and eat."
Isaiah 55:1.

THERE is a semicolon in our translation, but we need not take notice of it. It should not be there, since the text is the second of two parallel sentences arranged according to the method of Hebrew poetry—

***"Ho, everyone that thirsts, come you to the waters,
And he that has no money, come, buy, and eat."***

We have before us the figure of a merchant selling his wares, and crying like a peddler in the market, “Ho!” To attract attention he calls aloud, “Come! Come! Come!” three times, and he adds to this the cry of, “Buy! Buy!” Shall the Great King thus liken Himself to a trader in the market, earnest to dispose of His goods? It is even so, and I therefore call upon you to admire the mercy of the Lord.

In the fifty-third and fifty-fourth chapters, this Divine Merchantman has been spreading out His wares. What treasures they are! Look at the fifty-third chapter, what do you see there? Behold that pearl of great price, *the Lord Jesus Christ*. Behold Him wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities. This is so costly a treasure that heaven and earth could not match it. Where else could we find a sacrifice for sin, a justifier of many? This anointed One of God, upon whom the chastisement of our peace was laid—who would not have Him to be his Savior? Surely with such a treasure to display, we ought not to cry long for buyers, for every truly wise man will exclaim, “This is what I need, a Savior, and a great one. Atonement for sin is the one thing necessary for me.” To this you are invited in these words, “He that has no money, come, buy, and eat.”

In the fifty-fourth chapter the Divine Merchantman sets forth the rare possession of *His everlasting love*. Read from verse seven, “For a small moment have I forsaken you; but with great mercies will I gather you. In a little wrath I hid My face from you for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on you, says the Lord your Redeemer. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but My kindness shall not depart from you, neither shall the covenant of My peace be removed, says the Lord that has mercy on you.” What more can be set forth to win men’s hearts? First a full atonement and now love everlasting, making a covenant confirmed by oath. Shall there be need often to cry, “Come and buy,” when such celestial wares are displayed before us?

Added to this, we see a little further on the blessing of *heavenly edification*. Notice the eleventh verse—“I will lay your stones with fair colors, and lay your foundations with sapphires. And I will make your windows of agates, and your gates of carbuncles, and all your borders of pleasant stones.” This is a rare building, is it not? There should be a quick market for such an array of choice things. Sapphires and agates—what more would you have? Here are all manner of precious stones, and all of these given freely! The only terms are, “everything for nothing! Heaven for the asking!” All the treasures of God are freely bestowed upon the sons of men who are willing to accept them as gifts of grace.

As if this were not enough, the Lord brings out a fourth blessing, namely, *everlasting safety by faith*, “In righteousness shall you be established: you shall be far from oppression; for you shall not fear: and from terror; for it shall not come near you. No weapon that is formed against you shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against you in judgment you shall condemn.” Security is worth infinitely more than gold. To be protected by Divine wisdom from every possible harm is the portion of believers in Jesus. To be saved, and made safe forever, is not this worth worlds? Never was there a market like the gospel market. And never were such wares spread out before the eyes of men as those which are here presented to you. I shall therefore with the more hopefulness, speak to those who have not yet been buyers, and urge upon you the invitation of the text, “He that has no money, come, buy, and eat.”

In handling this text we shall notice, first, *the description* of the buyer, "He that has no money." Secondly, *the selection* of this particular buyer—why is he invited beyond all others? Thirdly, *the invitation* to purchase, "Come, buy, and eat." And fourthly, we shall add *the assurance* that this gospel market is no deception, for these things are really to be had.

I. First, then, here is A DESCRIPTION of the buyer. I believe he is here this morning. I hope he will recognize his own portrait, though it is by no means a flattering one. It is truth itself, a photograph taken by the sunlight of heaven. It is the portrait of a poor, penniless, broken-down creature reduced to the extremity of need. Here it is—"He that has no money."

Of course, by this is meant, among other things, the man who literally has no money. Among the Jews of our Lord's day there existed an idea that a man who had money was at a great advantage with regard to heavenly things, so that when the Lord said, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom," they exclaimed with wonder, "Who, then, can be saved?" as if they thought that if the rich could not be easily saved then none could be. The Word of God contains nothing to encourage such a notion. The rich man is never extolled in the Old Testament, but he is often spoken of most slightly. It is the glory of the Messiah that "the poor have the gospel preached to them," and it is the glory of the gospel that it is freely provided by the bounty of God for the beggar on the dunghill. Let no man's heart fail him this day because he says, "Silver and gold have I none." Having nothing, you may yet possess all things. You are at no disadvantage in God's market because your pockets are empty. You may come penniless and bankrupt and receive the exceeding riches of His grace. But we understand the reference of the text to be mainly spiritual, and so the portrait here is that of a man who has no spiritual money, no gold of goodness, no silver of sanctity—he it is that is invited to come and buy the wine and milk of heaven.

His fancied stock of natural innocence is spent. At first he thought himself to be pure as the newly fallen snow, forgetting the question—"How can he be clean that is born of a woman?" They told him that he was made "a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven" while he was yet a babe, and thus he was led to think that he had started life's business with a respectable stock in trade. He knows better now. He has seen this fancied goodness melt away like the mist of the morning. He has gone, like the prodigal, into the far country, and there he has wasted his substance till not a coin remains. If he searches himself through and through, he cannot find a relic of innocence. The whole head is sick and the whole heart faint, from the sole of the foot even to the head he is all wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores. There is no health in him. Innocence is utterly gone, if it was ever there.

He thought that he had accumulated some little savings of good works, but *his imaginary righteousness turned out to be counterfeit*. Had he not been honest? Had he not been sober? Had he not attended a place of worship, and repeated forms of prayer? Did not all this make up a little fortune of righteousness? He thought so, but then he was ignorant and deluded. He knows better now, for he has found out that all his righteousness is base metal. He could not pass a penny's worth of it in the shop of his own conscience, much less in the market of heaven. He knows that it would at once be detected, and nailed to the counter. He finds that his silver is white metal of the basest sort, and that his gold is a sham. He has not the face to offer it anywhere. Yes, he is so afraid of being seized by justice as a counterfeiter that, like a wise man, he has hidden his sham righteousness in the earth, and has run away from it. He is now more afraid of his righteousness than of his unrighteousness. He would think it just as possible for him to be saved by cursing and swearing as by the merit of his own works. His good works are an ill odor with his conscience, for he sees them to be defiled within and without with sin, rottenness is in the bones of his righteousness, and thus he is without merit of any sort. Look at his poverty, his original stock is gone, and all his savings have melted away!

He is in a still worse plight, for he is also too poor to get anything, *the procuring power is gone*, for he has "no money." Now that he has come to his sober senses, he would repent, but he cannot find a tender heart. He would believe, but he cannot find faith. He has no money, that is to say, nothing with which he can procure those good things which are necessary unto salvation and eternal life. He sees them all before him, like many a poor man who walks the streets of London, and sees just what he wants behind the glass of the shop window, but he puts his hand into his pocket, and despairingly passes on, for he has no money. As without money nothing is to be bought in the world's market, so is this poor

man afraid that no blessing of grace can ever be his because he has no good thing to offer, no righteousness to give in exchange. If God would sell him even a penny's worth of righteousness, he has not the penny to buy it with. And if the Lord would pardon all his sins for one sixpenny worth of holiness, he has not so much as that to offer—he has no money.

Moreover, *his stock with which to trade is gone*. Money makes money, and he that has a little to begin with may soon have more. But this man, having no stock to start with, cannot hope to be rich towards God in and by himself. He cannot open the smallest shop, or sell the most trifling wares, for he has no money to start with. Even the poorest will buy a few matches and hawk them about the streets, but this poor creature has "no money," and cannot even invest a two-pence in goods. He has no power even to think aright, much less to act aright, so as to become pleasing to God. He is as much without strength as without merit. Not only is he without good, but he appears to himself to be without power to get good. He is a broken trader who cannot again try his fortune, for he has "no money." He is worse than a common beggar, for he does not even know how to beg—"We know not what we should pray for as we ought." He even needs to be taught how to beg. What a pass to come to.

There is your portrait, my poor friend! Do you recognize it? I hope you do. I hear you say, "Yes, that is myself. I am without money." Then to you the word of this salvation is sent—"He that has no money, come, buy, and eat."

"No money!" Then *he cannot pay his old debts*. His sins rise up before him, but he cannot make amends for them. What a long file is needed to hold the record of his debts, it must be deep as the bottomless pit, and high as heaven. He owes ten thousand talents and has "nothing to pay." He has not a coin, he has no money whatever! He is reduced to bankruptcy, and cannot pay a farthing in the pound.

Moreover, *he cannot meet his present expenses*. Poor man! He must live. He must eat the bread of heaven, and he must drink of the water of life, but he has nothing with which to procure these good things. His soul hungers, yes, even faints after the mercy of God, but he has no price with which to procure it. This day he would pluck his eyes out to be pleasing to God, but he has nothing to offer which the Lord could accept. He is reduced to such beggary that like the prodigal he cries, "I perish with hunger."

He cannot face the future. He hardly dares to think of it, and yet the thought of it will come in. He remembers the needs which will surround him on a dying bed, and the terrible demands of the resurrection morning when the ringing trumpet shall introduce him to the dread Judgment, and he shall stand before his God to render his account. He knows that he cannot answer Him for one sin in a thousand. He dreads the thought of the world to come! He has nothing with which to meet the demands of the eternal future. He has "no money," nothing that will pass current in the day of judgment. He is brought to the last stage of spiritual destitution; poverty has come upon him like an armed man. This is a terrible plight to be in, yet I wish that every sinner here might be reduced to it, for when he is so reduced and brought low, grace will come in, and the tide will turn.

The only hope for a man who has "no money" must be outside himself. It is idle for him to look into his own coffers. He must look away from himself, and his only chance in thus looking is to appeal to charity, and plead for mercy's sake. He cannot buy—it is only God's mercy that talks about his buying. He must beg, he must entreat for love's sake. This is an essential part of spiritual poverty, and I would that every unregenerate person knew that in him there dwells no good thing, and that he were convinced that he must look out and look up for salvation, and that upon the ground of mercy, since he cannot expect to obtain any blessing upon the footing of justice or as a matter of debt.

This is the man who is called to buy heaven's wine and milk. Do you need a fuller picture of him? Look at the twenty-first verse of the fourteenth chapter of Luke's gospel, where He that made the feast said, "Bring in here the poor and the maimed and the halt and the blind." This man is so poor that he cannot buy bread, so maimed that he cannot run for it, so halt that he cannot stand up to receive it, and so blind that he cannot see it. Yet such a person we are to bring into the royal banquet of mercy. If you would like another picture, turn to Revelation 3:17, 18—"You know not that you are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." This portrait was taken by John, who had an eagle's eye, and saw deep into the inward misery of the heart. To the "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked," the Lord says, "I counsel you to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that you may be rich, and white raiment, that you may be clothed, and that the shame of your nakedness does not appear, and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see." Gospel riches are sent to remove our wretchedness, and mercy to

remove our misery. It is to these wretches, these blind beggars, and these naked vagrants, that the gospel is sent. This day I have to present the promise of God and the exhortation of mercy to those who have failed in life, who are down at the heel, broken and crushed. Oh, you utterly lost ones, to you is there opened a door of hope. The Lord has come into the market, and He bids you buy of Him without money and without price!

II. Now a minute or two upon the second point, THE SELECTION of the buyer. It is a strange choice, and it leads to a singular invitation, "He that has no money, come, buy, and eat." In the streets round about this Tabernacle, especially on a Saturday evening, you may note the salesmen standing before their shops and crying out vociferously, "Buy! Buy! Buy!" No one can refuse to hear their noise, but if they knew that a person had no money, I think they would save their breath so far as he is concerned. They need ready-money customers, and plenty of them. What would be the use of crying, "Buy! Buy!" to a man whose purse is empty? Yet these are the very persons whom the Lord selects, and to them He cries, "Come, buy, and eat." What is the reason?

Well, first, *these need mercy the most*. Oh, poor souls, when the Lord Jesus looks on you, He does not look at what you have, but at what you have not. He does not look at your excellences, but at your necessities. He is not looking out for man's fullness, but for man's emptiness. The Lord Jesus never gave Himself for our righteousness, but He "gave Himself for our sins." Salvation is by grace, and it is presented to those who are lost, for they are the people whom it will suit. How should those who are not lost value salvation? I say that God selects the most poverty-stricken first, because this character most needs His pitying love. The greatness of your necessity is that which gives you a first call from the God of all grace. Not merit, but demerit. Not desert of reward, but desert of wrath, is the qualification for mercy.

Again, this character is chosen because *he is such a one as will exhibit in his own person the power of divine grace*. If the Lord Jesus Christ takes one that is wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked, and if He satisfies all his necessities by being riches for his wretchedness, comfort for his misery, wealth for his poverty, eyes for his blindness, and raiment for his nakedness, then all the world will see what a great Savior He is, and how wonderfully His salvation meets the necessities of the case. If you and I were only little sinners, I do not see how Christ could be anything but a little Savior to us. And if He only met our smaller needs, a small supply would suffice. Ah, friends, it pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell, and He wills that this fullness should be seen. When He takes a man whose needs are as large as the sea, and as many as the sands on the shore, whose danger is deep as the bottomless pit, and whose sin is black as Tophet's midnight. And when He makes that man into a child of God and an heir of heaven, ah, then all intelligences are amazed, and cry out, "What a Savior is this! What precious blood is this! What a fullness this must be which satisfies such immeasurable needs!" As it is one end of Christ's work to glorify divine grace, therefore He calls first upon those who have the most need, for in them His grace will be best displayed.

Next, *the Lord Jesus delights to make evident the freeness of His grace*. Now, if those were first called who have the money of merit, it might be imagined that they had paid their way. But if those are called who have no good thing in them, it is clear that grace is free. When a poor wretch cannot do a stroke of work, or contribute a button to you, then your lodging him must be of pure charity, and nothing else. The Lord Jesus is very jealous of the freeness of His grace. He will not let a sixpence of our merit cross His hand, lest we should glory in our flesh, and think that we have made Jesus rich.

If you ask me yet again why is he who has no money so expressly called, I would answer, because *he is the kind of man that will listen*. The man who is needy is the man that will listen to the tidings of a full and free supply. It is the guilty man who loves to hear of pardon. It is the bond-slave whose ears are charmed with the word, "redemption." If you are no sinner you will not care about a Savior. Only real sinners rejoice in a real atonement. The Lord sends the gospel to every creature under heaven, but He knows, as we do, that the most of men will not regard it, for they fancy that they don't need it. But if there is one that has no merit or claim, he will listen with eagerness to the tidings of mercy for him. He that has no money is the man for Christ's money. He that is shivering in his nakedness will rejoice to be clothed. A wretched sinner jumps at mercy like a hungry fish leaping at the bait. When a soul is empty, then it longs for the fullness of Christ, but not till then. Full souls quarrel over honeycombs, they are not sweet enough for them, but to the hungry man, even every bitter thing is sweet. A man who is conscious

of sin will not quibble about the way of grace, but if pardon is to be had, he will have it at once. Whoever may be silent, you will hear his voice crying aloud, "You Son of David, have mercy on me!"

Let me add that such an empty, penniless soul, when he does get mercy, *will prize it and praise it*. He that has been shut up in the dark for years values the light of the sun. He that has been a prisoner for months, how happy he is when the prison doors are opened, and he is at liberty again! Let a man once get Christ, who has bitterly known and felt his need of Him, and he will prize Him beyond all things, and find his sole delight in Him. The impotent man at the beautiful gate of the temple, when his ankles received strength, walked, yes, and ran, yes, and leaped. He leaped, praising God, before all the people. He could not do enough to show his delight and his gratitude. Oh, for a few leaping Christians. The Lord Jesus loves us to prize the mercy which cost Him so dearly. Shall He die on the cross and give us blessings to treat with contempt? No, no. We will love Him much because of His priceless gifts to us. Therefore the Well-beloved delights to invite those who manifestly have no merit, and no spiritual power, because He knows that when they taste of His love, they will overflow with praise to His name forever and ever. You have heard of the old woman who said that if ever she got to heaven the Lord Jesus Christ should never hear the last of it? Many of us are of that mind. We shall never praise the Lord sufficiently throughout eternity. If I do but once, cross the golden threshold, and stand within the pearly gate, my heart, my soul, my tongue, shall extol my Redeemer world without end. This shall be the one and only contention among the birds of Paradise, who shall sing the most sweetly to the praise of infinite compassion. None of us will yield the palm in that contest. We will see which can sink lowest in sense of obligation, which can rise highest in adoring love. Singers are needed for the celestial choirs and there are no voices as sweet as those which have known the force of spiritual hunger and thirst. These take the alto notes, and sing, "Glory to God in the highest."

In any case, be the reason what it may, it is clear that there are special invitations issued for the royal feasts, and these are all directed to those whose need has reached the extremity of distress.

But I may not linger. How I wish that I knew how to preach! I long with my whole heart to use great plainness of speech. I would not utter a single sentence which would seem to have the wisdom of words in it. I aim not at fine language, but only to get at poor sinners' hearts. Oh that I could bring the sinner to his Savior. Oratory has been the curse of the Christian church. It has hidden the cross under roses, and taken men's minds away from Christ. To strain after eloquence when preaching the gospel, is a sin worthy of eternal destruction. To point the sinner to Christ must be our sole desire. Pray for me, brethren, as I go on, for I need aid from the Holy Spirit.

III. I have now, in the third place, to notice THE INVITATION. The man who has no money is to *come, buy, and eat*. It looks odd to tell a penniless man to come and buy, does it not? And yet what other words could be used? Come and *buy*, has a meaning of its own not to be otherwise expressed.

In buying there are three or four stages, the first is, *desiring to have* the thing which is exhibited. The man who buys has first the wish that the property in the article should be vested in himself. Will you not desire that Christ, that forgiveness, that eternal life, that salvation should become yours? Do you not long for the Lord to grant it to you?

Men in the streets, as I have said before, cry, "Buy! Buy!" because buying means business. They are not unwilling that people should stop and look at their goods—they even ask them to walk in and see for themselves, but they aim at finding buyers and not gazers. If a man were to come into the shop and turn over all the goods, and never purchase anything, the tradesman would begin to cry, "Buy! Buy!" with quite another accent, for he does not want a crowd to look at him, but he wants people to buy from him. Many of you who are here this morning have only come to hear what the preacher has to say, and to criticize his style and language. I pray you rise to something better than that. Come, and *buy*! Let us do business this morning for God, and for our own souls. Do not waste the precious market day of the Sabbath. People come and go, and hear sermons, and read books, and all for a sort of amusement. They do not come to do business with the Lord. Look how they select striking sentences and cull sparkling and delightful extracts, and take notes of telling anecdotes. But all this is comparatively wasting time. "Come, *buy*! Buy! Buy!" Do you mean business? Then come and buy. Do not stand huckstering by the years together. Come to terms, and make an end of hesitation. If you have no desire you will not buy, and I shall achieve no sales. Again I cry, "Come, buy, and eat." Oh that the Spirit may work in you that strong desire without which no man will ever buy! Alas! There are thousands who are always discussing

knotty points, not because they have a wish to understand the gospel, but because they do not care to come to serious dealings. Perhaps you have read the story of a governor of one of the American States who called at a hotel where there was a black waiter, who was well known to hold Calvinistic opinions, and was, therefore, made the butt for many a jest. So the Governor said to him, "Sam, you do not really believe that doctrine of election, do you?" "Deed I do, Suh," he said. "Well, then," replied the Governor, "tell me whether I am elect or not." "Suh," said the Negro, "I did not know you were a candidate, and I know nothing about a man's being elected if he has not put up for it." Now, that is common sense. It is a business-like way of answering an absurd question. Certain people who are not even candidates for heaven will yet shelter themselves behind wrong ideas of predestination—playing with the blessings of grace instead of desiring them. Have you not seen a man with a pack stand at a door trying to sell a few trinkets to a servant? He does not mind half-an-hour's talk about his goods, but when at last he finds that the maid does not mean buying, see how he shuts up his boxes, folds up his packages, and indignantly takes off, saying by his gestures, "I wish I had not wasted so much time on you." It is just so with earnest preachers. They grow sick at heart when they see that men will not come to business. They cry, "Who has believed our report?" and are anxious to carry their heavenly burden to another people. Oh, dear hearers, let us not have to shake the dust off of our feet for a testimony against you! Oh, that you would hunger and thirst after Christ and His salvation, and then we should soon do a trade with you.

"Buy."—This means next, to *agree to terms*, for there cannot be any purchasing, however much the buyer desires to buy and the seller to sell, till they agree to terms. Now, our difficulty with God's goods is this, whereas ordinarily the buyer cannot be brought *up* to the seller's price, in our case we cannot get men *down* to God's price. They *will* persist in offering something or other as a price. They talk to us thus—"I cannot be saved, for I do not see any good thing in myself. Sir, if I had a deep sense of need, then I could be saved," or "Sir, if I could pray better," or "Sir, if I had more repentance, or more love, I could then believe in Jesus." Oh, yes, if you had a price in your hand, you would pay for heaven's blessings, would you not? But then, you see, they are not presented to you upon such terms. Price is out of the question. God's terms are that there shall be no terms of purchase at all, you are to be nothing, and Jesus is to be your all in all. When you will come down to that, then take the goods, the bargain is made, eternal life is yours.

The next thing in a purchase is that, when the terms are carried out, *the buyer appropriates the goods to himself*. If I buy a thing it is mine, and I take it into my possession. You do not see a man buy a thing and then leave it behind him for the seller to do as he likes with it. In the things of God you are to appropriate the blessing to yourself. Put out the hand of faith, and say, "Here is Christ for a sinner. I am a sinner, and I take Christ to be my Savior. Here is washing for the filthy. I am filthy, and I wash. Here is a robe of righteousness for the naked. I am naked. I take the raiment to be mine." Make Christ your own, and He has made you His own. Take the Lord by an appropriating act of faith to be yours forever and the bargain is struck.

But the text says a little more than that—it says, "Buy, *and eat*," as much as to say, "Make it yours in the most complete sense." If a man buys a loaf of bread it is his, but if he eats it, then all the lawyers in the world cannot dispute him out of it—he has it by a possession which is not only nine points of the law, but all the law. When a poor soul has confidence enough, to take Christ and to live upon Him as his own, saying, "This Christ is able to save me, I take Him into me and I am saved," why, the devil himself cannot unsave you. What is to divide him from Christ? There is the bath, and I wash in it and am clean. What then? Who can obliterate the fact that I have washed? The righteousness of Christ is bestowed upon me, and put on by me, who can tear off that glorious dress? Christ fed upon is ours beyond all question. No method of possession is more sure and safe than that of eating what you have bought. Feed, then, on Christ, the bread of heaven, and though you are in yourself the poorest of the poor, yet He is yours forever and ever.

See, then, the blessed invitation, the whole of God's mercy in Christ, infinite love and boundless compassion are to be had for no price at all. They are freely given to every man who has no money with which to procure them. The height of love meets the depths of poverty and fills them up. He that has nothing is invited to have all things, for he is the person for whom they were provided in the eternal purposes of God.

IV. I conclude now by saying a few things by way of ASSURANCE, to show that this is all real and true, and no make-believe. Every needy, thirsty soul may have this day, all the grace of God. Oh, may the Spirit of God make him willing; he shall have all the blessings of the covenant of grace to be his own forever and ever! This is no sham. There is an honest offer made to everyone who is conscious of soul-poverty!

For, first, *it is not God's way to mock men.* He has Himself declared, "I said not unto the seed of Jacob, seek you My face in vain." God has not said one thing in one place and another in another, to contradict Himself. He has not in the Scriptures bid men come to Him with the promise that He will not cast them out, all the while meaning of some of them that He will cast out. No, there are no exceptions made in the promises of God to empty sinners who come to Him. You must not dream of exceptions which do not exist. Jesus says, "He that comes to Me, I will in no wise cast out," and this includes all who come. I am speaking to some this morning who have come across the Atlantic and are not yet saved. You may have been careless and thoughtless all your lives, but if you come to Jesus Christ this morning He will not refuse you His salvation. Many have come in from the country today, oh that this may become their spiritual birthday! Come to the Lord Jesus Christ, my friend, and He will welcome you. He has never rejected one, and He never will. He will not find pleasure in tantalizing you. He is too good, too true, to become a deceiver even to one poor lonely seeker. His word of promise to you is true and real, every word is full of meaning, sweeter meaning than you dream of. Grace shall be had by you at once if you will but take it "without money and without price." Men mock men, but God never deludes. We may say of Him, "Your word is truth."

Note that these mercies must be really meant to be given free to the poor, because *God is under no necessity to sell His benefits.* He is not impoverished. He is so rich that none can add anything to His wealth. All things are His, therefore He must give freely, since it would be beneath His all-sufficiency to be haggling for compensation, or demanding a price at a creature's hands. He means the penniless to have everything for nothing, since nothing can be imagined to be a price to Him. If a poor tradesman began to give away his goods you would say, "There is some trick about this." But when the Most High God, the possessor of heaven and earth, who has everything, freely gives to us, then there can be no design for His own advantage. His motive must be pure compassion.

There is no adequate price that we could bring to God for His mercy. How could there be? Would it be mercy if it could be bought? Grace is without price because it is priceless. You can buy gold if you will; there is some medium of exchange for the purchase of every finite thing. But what medium of exchange could there be for the purchase of infinite blessings? Huge heaps of such things as the native Africans call money would be of no value to us, and what self-righteous men call merit is utterly despicable to God. Is there any comparison between a man's giving all his wealth and the possession of eternal glory? No comparison can be instituted between metals and spiritual joys. As you cannot bring any price, I do pray you believe that God is honest when He declares that He will give you pardon of sin and all the blessings of His grace of God without money and without price. You cannot have them otherwise. Do believe that He means you to receive them by grace.

Remember that Jesus must be meant for sinners, for *if sinners had not existed there never would have been a Savior.* When the Lord Jesus Christ set up in business to save, He must have known that there was no sphere for His operations except among sinners, and therefore He entered in His office with the view of saving sinners. If a doctor comes into a town, and there is nobody ill, and it is certain that nobody ever will be ill, he had better drive off somewhere else. He will do most business where there is most sickness. When Christ Jesus became a soul-physician, He had His eyes on the spiritually sick and on them alone. They are the patients who make up His practice, and they only. If, then, you are sick even unto death, put your case into the hands of Christ, for He will heal you.

Remember, too, that it must be true that God will give these blessings to men who have no merits, and will bestow them as gifts, because *Jesus Himself is a gift.* Did anybody ever dream of buying Christ? Stand at the foot of the cross and say to yourself, "Could I ever have procured this vast display of love by any merit of mine? Could I have done anything which could have merited that the Son of God should become man, and being found in fashion as a man, He should die such a death as this for me?" Salvation must be a gift, for Jesus is a gift. Away with your sacraments, your ceremonies, your prayers, your alms, your good works, if these are made the brass penny with which you hope to buy such inestim-

mable things as pardon, sonship, heaven! Salvation is seen to be such when it is given to those who have no money of their own.

Beside that, *Christ is all*. Men have no notion what Christ is when they talk of getting ready for Christ, or bringing something to Him. What would you bring to Christ? Everything is in Christ, and therefore you cannot bring anything to Him. "Oh, but," you say, "I must come with a broken heart." I tell you, no, you must come *for* a broken heart. "Oh, but I must come with a sense of need." I tell you that a true sense of need is His work in you. True repentance and a sense of need spring from His grace, and you must get them from Him without money and without price. "Ah, but I must *be* something." Say, rather, you must be nothing. We cannot drill this into men's brains. No, if we were to use steam power to work upon the mind, we could not get this thought fixed in their proud hearts. They will cling to merit; they must *be* something, *feel* something, *say* something, *do* something. Away with your somethings! Subside into nothingness. The Spirit of God brooded of old over chaos, so that order was clearly His work, and when the mind seems to be all chaos and darkness, then the Spirit of God is sure to work, and the Lord's voice is heard, saying, "Let there be light!" Go to the Lord Jesus just as you are. You will never be better—you may be worse. Go now, just as you are, to Jesus, and buy and eat without money, means, or merit.

One thing more I would say, and that is the gospel of Jesus Christ is blessedly free from all clogging conditions, because *all supposed conditions are supplied in Christ Jesus*. We have heard of men advertising to give things away, but when you read the advertisement carefully, you find that you are to pay, after all. The gospel is not so. Its freedom is real. Many a good thing is to be had, but when you see how it is to be obtained, you say to yourself, "the conditions shut me out." But the conditions of eternal life shut no man out who needs to be saved and wills to be saved. Over the gate of heaven is written, "Come, and welcome." But you remind me that it says, "Buy," and you insist upon it that therefore you must pay. Not so. Salvation is already paid for, all the paying has been done by Him who opened His veins to find the only price that is current in heaven—the sin-atonishing blood. If price may be spoken of—that price was all paid long before you were born. The purchasing work was done nearly 1,900 years ago on Calvary's cross, and Jesus bowed His head and said, "It is finished." Will you add to that which is finished? Will you tag on your rags to the Lord's glistening cloth of gold, and add your base farthings to the infinite price which He poured forth so lavishly at the foot of the Eternal Throne? Oh, don't do it. To yoke you with Christ can never be. You and Christ together! An archangel and an ant would make a better pair than you yoked with Christ. No, my friend, sink, sink, sink, by a mighty descent sink to nothing, and let Jesus rise, rise, rise, till He fills the whole horizon of your thoughts and hopes, for then are you saved. Let us sing—

*"Tis done! The great transaction's done!
I am my Lord's and He is mine!
He drew me, and I followed on,
Charmed to confess the voice divine."*

**PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—ISAIAH 55.
HYMNS FROM "OUR OWN HYMN BOOK"—487, 496, 233.**

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